

NewsRelease

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NASA LANGLEY VISITOR CENTER TO UNVEIL "ADVENTURES IN FLIGHT"

NASA Langley Research Center's visitor center in downtown Hampton, Va., is celebrating this year's centennial of flight with the unveiling of a new state-of-the-art, interactive gallery. The one million-cubic-foot "Adventures in Flight" in the Virginia Air & Space Center (VASC) chronicles not only the history of aviation, but also NASA Langley's contributions to the future of flight.

The \$6.4 million Adventures in Flight gallery, which opens November 8, features a DC-9 aircraft donated by an airline. The plane, which invites visitors to step aboard and sit at the controls of a "glass cockpit" simulator, dominates the main gallery. NASA Langley researchers helped develop glass cockpit technology in the 1970s. Glass cockpit displays show pilots information with the help of computer graphics and have replaced steam gauges and dials in many aircraft.

"NASA Langley congratulates the Virginia Air & Space Center on the creation of this new aviation gallery," said Roy D. Bridges, Langley Research Center director. "It helps illustrate not only NASA Langley's vital role in the development of today's air transportation system and contributions to military aviation, but also shows how our current research is creating new technology for the next century of flight."

The VASC has captured those futuristic designs in a special NASA display that shows "Jetson-like" airplane concepts that may some day fly on an interstate skyway. The exhibit depicts other next-generation aircraft and systems being developed by Langley engineers. NASA researchers are studying ways to make planes safer, quieter and more efficient.

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Also new to the Virginia Air & Space Center is a NASA research aircraft that tested technology to improve the safety and maneuverability of up-to-date military fighters in combat situations. NASA Langley engineers used the F-18 HARV (High Alpha Research Vehicle) from 1987-96 to study airflow, aircraft control and engine performance at high angles of attack, the extreme flight attitudes experienced by jets during air combat missions. Systems tested on the F-18 HARV have already been applied to new military fighters, including the F-22 Raptor.

The new Adventures in Flight gallery adds to an already impressive collection of NASA artifacts at the VASC. They include the Apollo XII capsule that carried Americans to the moon for a second time, a moon rock and a NASA Langley aircraft that was struck by lightning repeatedly in the name of safety research.

For more information on the Virginia Air & Space Center, please check the Internet at:

www.vasc.org

For more information on NASA's Langley Research Center, please check the Internet at:

www.larc.nasa.gov